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DEPARTMENT FOR AF A/S FRAZER, AF/SE NATSIOS, AF/SPG, AF/PD,  
IIP/G/AF, RRU-AF, NSC FOR PITTMAN AND SHORTLEY

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SUBJECT: HYBRID FORCE AS SPUN INTERNALLY TO THE SUDANESE -  
NOT ALL AFRICAN AND NEVER BEEN TRIED BEFORE

Classified By: CDA Alberto Fernandez, Reason: Section 1.4 (b) and (d)

11. (U) On June 13, semi-official Khartoum daily "Akhbar al-Yawm" clarified the meaning of the Sudanese Government's acceptance of the AU/UN Hybrid Force to its pro-regime, Arabic speaking readership. It did so in a half-page "dialogue" in a question and answer format based on telephone conversations between regime mouthpiece Ahmad Bilal al-Tayyib and MFA Under-Secretary Muttriff Al-Siddiq in Addis Ababa, and again between Al-Tayyib and Sudanese Ambassador to the UN Akkawi Bona Malwal. It constitutes to date the most detailed public account of what the Sudanese regime is saying it accepted in Addis and how it is presenting it to its base.

12. (U) The article is titled "In phone conversations with Addis and New York, an Attempt to answer the Difficult Question: Has the Government Agreed to International Forces in Darfur?" The author notes that he couldn't sleep with the disturbing news that Sudan had agreed to allow international forces into Darfur. Al-Tayyib first asks about what was actually agreed to and Ambassador Malwal responds that "there was acceptance of the changes and suggestions we had proposed, which are that the hybrid force would have African leadership, administration and composition and, if that was not enough, it could be accepted to include troops from countries friendly to Sudan and, if there was still a deficit, it could be made up from other countries in consultation with the Sudanese Government."

13. (U) The author then asks, "Does this constitute an agreement by the Sudanese Government on the entry of international forces into Darfur?" To which the answer is: "I cannot say that since most of the troops will be from African countries or from friendly countries or from other countries with consultation from the Sudanese Government." The author then asks how many forces these will be and receives the answer: "Between 22 and 23,000 of which 13,000 will be police."

14. (U) Al-Tayyib then asks Under Secretary Muttriff, "What exactly does hybrid mean?" To which the answer is that "the hybrid force will not be 100 per cent African nor 100 per cent UN but a mixture of the two in a way that has never been tried before."

15. (U) He then queries Muttriff if this will mean the end of American and British threats to Sudan. Muttriff answers that "there is no reason for these threats in the first place; rather they are an attempt to cover for their failure in Iraq and Afghanistan, so we should not expect that their threats will end, but our actions could increase the understanding of the international community and isolate their threats against

us."

¶6. (C) Comment: This fascinating exchange provides some context for seeing GOS acceptance of the hybrid force. It is a genuine concession ) that there could be non-African troops and almost certainly will be and that the numbers are about right. At the same time, the usual regime reluctance and the temptation to continue to play with composition and numbers are all there as well. Public pressure should be maintained to ensure that this "acceptance" does not become yet another GOS opportunity to squeeze another six months of delay from the international community. At the same time, there exists a pressing need to maintain momentum on implementation of all three phases of the peacekeeping framework and the UN/AU political process. End comment.  
FERNANDEZ